DFID funds of £102 million/Rs. 816 crore will be pooled with the World Bank, out of which, £7 million will be for technical assistance. This includes £5 million for contracting a technical resource to support the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) to deliver NACP 3 and the remaining £2 million will be channeled to support the first UN Joint Support Plan for HIV/AIDS in India.

(d) A number of British companies that visited India as part of the Healthcare Mission in January, 2007, have either signed joint ventures with Indian companies or are pursuing discussion with potential Indian partners.

Those that have signed joint ventures include:

- The Health Protection Agency UK, which has signed a royalty-bearing license with the Serum Institute of India to develop a pentavalent vaccine for India and developing countries for bacterial meningococcal disease;
- Practical Business Solutions, which has signed an MoU with ZWA Technology in Mumbai to deliver an emergency medical services programme in India; and
- The UK Royal College of Physicians, which has delivered a pilot course to a private sector hospital in Kerala.

British companies that are pursuing discussion with their Indian counterparts include the University of York, Eschmann Holdings, Tenscare and Smiths Medical International.

Private sector participation in rail projects

*271. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to invite private sector to participate in railway projects in the country ;

(b) if so, which are the areas the Railways have identified for the private sector participation; and

(c) whether his Ministry has ensured to maintain public sector character when private sector is allowed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Certain areas such as development of important identified stations, setting up of manufacturing units for rolling stock, infrastructure projects for port connectivity through Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) and several activities in catering/tourism and hospitality area have been identified for possible execution through public private partnership route.

(c) Yes, Sir. The basic objective of the public private partnership initiatives is to strengthen the Railways and improve services to customers. These do not entail any dilution of the public sector character of Railways.